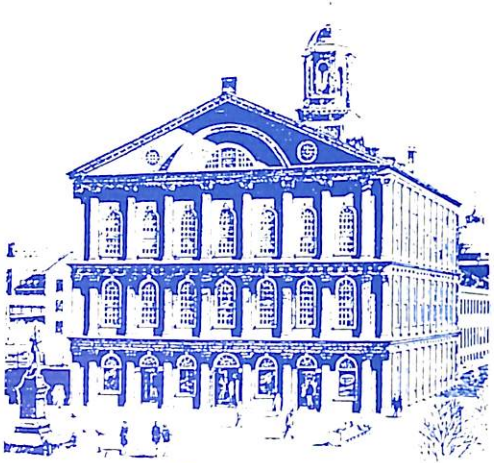
Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts



Armory
Faneuil Hall
Boston, Massachusetts 02109
Phone [617] 227 - 1638
Fax [617] 227 - 7221

Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company of Massachusetts

Founded - 1637

Chartered - 1638

ANCIENT AND HONORABLE ARTILLERY COMPANY OF MASSACHUSETTS

Chartered in 1638
The First Military Company Chartered in the Western Hemisphere

As the settlements which followed the landing at Plymouth increased and spread there was no organized military force for protection against the Indians. So-called "Train Bands" were formed in different settlements but these were only local volunteer companies and there was no joint action or centralized authority. Many of the settlers had been members in England of the Honourable Artillery Company of London (organized and chartered in 1537) and it was natural that the military training they had received in that Company should lead them to form a similar organization in the new country. In 1637 a Company was formed for instruction in discipline and tactics. Governor Winthrop granted a Charter in March 1638, and on the first Monday in June following, an election of Officers was held on Boston Common. Since that time, the Company has maintained the tradition of its annual elections on Boston Common on the first Monday in June by casting its votes on the Drum Head.

Since 1746, the Company Armory has been the upper floor of Faneuil Hall - an historic citadel known to all Americans.

In its Armory, the Company maintains a Military Museum and Library which is without equal in the United States. Here are relics of every war in which this Country has engaged since its settlement. The Armory is open to the public daily, and many thousands of visitors from every part of the world register every year in the Guest Book.

The members of the Company trod the fields of every battlefield of New England; they fought for freedom on foreign soil; they presided over the courts; they pleaded at the bar; they instituted town government and levelled forests; were active in settling the towns of the frontier. The Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company has served on every battlefield from Bunker Hill to Yorktown, the War of 1812 and the Civil War, both World Wars, Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm.

This is the Company that Washington knew, that Franklin saw march through the streets of Boston, that John Adams and John Quincy Adams visited; that has had seven members who received our nation's highest military decoration - the Medal of Honor - and has had four of its members serve in the world's most important office, President of the United States - Presidents James Monroe, Chester Alan Arthur, Calvin Coolidge and John F. Kennedy; the same Company which has always stood for, and always will stand for, the best in citizenship.